

June 22, 2007

Rep. Steve Tobocman S106 Capitol Building Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Rep. Tobocman:

As you know, the Detroit River Tunnel Partnership (DRTP) plans on building an enlarged rail tunnel on our existing property. This replacement tunnel will allow the movement of high-capacity rail cars through Detroit that are now traveling through Port Huron and other U.S.-Canada crossings due to size constraints of the current tunnel. With the purchase of necessary property from the City of Detroit this month, the reality of the replacement rail tunnel has reached a high level of certainty. This project will create hundreds of jobs and help keep our economy moving in Southeast Michigan.

In much the same way, your legislation to create the Michigan Border Development and Protection Authority Act (MBDPA) will provide necessary coordination of economic development infrastructure to keep communities that host Michigan's border crossings moving forward. As you know, international gateway communities face unique community challenges involving environmental issues, homeland security, and traffic flow. It will be useful to have public and private sector members of a state authority empowered to actively develop economic growth policies and strategic plans for addressing those challenges. Such a body should not take the place of private enterprise, but should supplement it.

We also support your continued calls for international crossings to come under some model of a public authority. The DRTP shares the goals of ensuring competitive tolls and fees, providing appropriate redundancy for homeland security, allowing government review of structural integrity, enforcement of hazardous waste transport regulations, and meeting the needs of communities where border crossings are located.

While we recognize that House Bill 4563 will evolve as it moves through committee and floor consideration, we are comfortable with the parameters you establish in the current legislation. We would welcome opportunities to work with you and your staff to provide reference materials, hearing testimony or other support as the legislation is reviewed.

Thank you again for your interest in border communities. If I can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 313.719.6422.

Sincerely,